15: Nakane K-5 (1955-1956) 1967 AR? Khasi AR?

6. The Bhoi — occupy the northern slopes of the Khasi Hills, covered with thick semi-tropical forests; they practise jhum cultivation. 619

9. The Lyngam — inhabit the western border of the Khasi Hills, near the Garo Hills. They are said to be half-Khasi and half-Garo. Their economy is similar to that of the Bhoi.

These ecological and geographical differences correspond also to politico-historical differences. From the 16th century to 1835, eve of the annexation of the Jaintia Hills to the Khasi Hills under the British administration, the people of the Jaintia Hills formed part of the Hindu Jaintia kingdom, whose capital was Jaintiapur, on the border of the present East Pakistan and of the Jaintia Hills. The capital, at one time, was moved to Nartiang near Jowai in the heart of the Jaintia Hills. The Jaintia Hills were administered by twelve governors. Such a highly developed economic system as based on wet rice cultivation, must have helped a great deal in forming a kingdom adjoining the plain. Through the common economy and political organization with the Hindus of the plain, the Hindu civilization of the Bengal plain penetrated deeply among the Jaintias, who are matrilineal hill dwellers. 175 648

On the other hand, the Khasi Hills have remained outside the histories of either Assam or Bengal. They were governed by a number of petty native chiefs: there were twenty-five chiefs ruling the Khasi Hills when the British colonial administration was established there. Most of these chiefs belonged to the Siem clan. The history of the Khasi Hills had been shrouded in darkness till the beginning of the 19th century, except for fragmentary stories such as Khasi raids on the Sylhet people.

The development of the upland Khasi Hills started with the establishment of its headquarters at Shillong in 1874. Since then the features of the Khasi and Jaintia Hills have changed a great deal. What was once a small Khasi hamlet, untouched by the light of history, has become nowadays a busy modern town where many Khasi intellectuals live, mixing with various outsiders who are engaged in official work or in business. The British administration opened the way to missionary activities, especially that of the Welsh Calvinist Methodists who set up a mission in the Hills in 1841, almost at the same time as British political influence began to make itself felt in the Khasi Hills. Along with the political penetration from Cherrapunjee (1833) to Shillong, missionaries established many institutions, including churches, schools and hospitals, etc. Christian education, bringing with it the promise of clerical positions, attracted young Khasi a great deal, and the majority of the upland Khasi have been converted to Christianity. They have become the modern intellectuals of their people. 179 648 797 [871] [949]

15: Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1967 AR7 Khasi AR7.

Shella

Confederacy forms a more marked endogamous community, through being cut off geographically and economically from the rest of the Khasi, and socially from the neighbouring Hindu people. 621

The Economy and the People.

Shella lies along the upper part of the Shella River and stretches upwards along the steep slope, looking down towards the Bengal plain. The climate of this part of the hills is considered to be one of the worst in tropical India for human habitation. The Bengal plain, though warmer than this area, is considered more healthy. This border land is the zone of malaria, typhoid, black fever, cholera, etc. None of the Bengalee peasants dare to live in such an area. However, it is the most fertile for products such as betel-nuts, pan-leaves, oranges, bananas and pineapples, and it also produces limestone. These people seem to prefer to settle in this zone and to enjoy its prosperity, at the expense of human lives: every year, especially between March and September, the inhabitants suffer from various fevers and dysentry and other diseases, many of the weaker facing death. 131 132 164 433 164 648

Before the Partition of India and Pakistan, the products of Shella were carried down the Shella River to Sylhet, one of the biggest centres in East Bengal, which brought unimaginable wealth to the Shella people. Their houses were built by carpenters from Sylhet. The style and structure of these houses were exceptionally elaborate for the Khasi. They purchased vast rice fields in the plain, which used to be cultivated by Bengalee and Garo labourers engaged by them. These Khasi do not themselves know how to cultivate rice fields; they have always been managers or landowners. Their boys used to be sent to high schools and colleges in Sylhet. As a result of their trading with the Bengalee, many of them read and speak fluent Bengalee. There is no difference between their style of clothing and that of the Bengalee, though the women maintain their traditional dress in the Shella style. 177 178 434 [439] [342] [166] [464] [874] [191] [291]

They have thus been distinguished from the rest of the Khasi not only geographically, but also economically and culturally. Their personality also differs sharply from the rest of the Khasi. They are very sensible, and quick, a quality lacking among the Khasi of Sohhyndah and Kongton. They are clever enough to deal with strangers. The upland Khasi say Shella people are very cunning. This remark shows one side of these people. They had to be cunning, since they traded with the Sylhet Bengalee who were said to be the most cunning of their race. Their role in the trade and in the history of the modernization of the Hills was considerable. For centuries they represented intellectual Khasi owing to their contact with Hindu civilization, while the Hills remained in darkness. They assumed an important role when the British established an administration in the Hills, and even up to now, many leading Khasi originated from this area: for instance, Latti Hajt, the first interpreter of the British Headquarters at Cherrapunjee; Joshua Roy, who was the first Magistrate among the Khasi; Mohan Sing, a lawyer and Member of the Legislative Assembly (the grandson of Joshua Roy); Nicholis Roy, Minister of Health and Finance of the Assam Government, Member of the Legislative Assembly, and Missionary of the Church of God; R. B. Thomas (brother of Nicholis Roy), Principal of the Gauhati University, etc. 157 184 648 177 178 [439]

Through constant cultural contact with Hindu, and encouraged by their economic prosperity, the Shella Khasi, like the Jaintias, have been much influenced by Hindu culture. However, this does not mean that the people of Shella adopted the Hindu beliefs. Though there is a small Hindu shrine, and some ceremonial elements were borrowed from the Hindu, most of the 177 648 111 195

15: Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1967 AR7 Khasi AR7

like the Zemi-Naga, the Cacharee and the Kuki. But after the period of economic prosperity as I shall describe in the next section, the Jatinga people reached a rather high level of education, while most of the neighbouring tribes remained illiterate. Their standard of living likewise improved. Fashionable girls of Jatinga who have studied at the Convent school in Shillong, and speak English and Hindi, cannot marry half-naked tribesmen who work in the jungle. They prefer to intermarry with Moslem, Punjabee or Assamese who belong to more sophisticated community, and through whom they can enjoy urban life. Thus the orientation of the intermarriage of the people of Jatinga has changed, along with the growth of Jatinga.

It should be noted that intermarriages came mostly through the contacts at Haflong, where people used to go once a week for the bazaar, rather than through direct contacts with neighbouring villages.

Economy of Jatinga and its Relation to Neighbouring Tribes.

It is very interesting to find two different kinds of economy in the same ecological background: Jatinga Khasi practise pan-leaf and orange cultivation and depend mainly on a trading economy, while the other neighbouring tribal peoples practise jhum cultivation, almost a subsistence economy. This situation has remained unchanged for the last fifty years since the establishment of Jatinga village.

The first Jatinga immigrants occupied one ridge of the mountain where the present Jatinga is situated. Formerly, this land belonged to the Zemi-Naga, one of the old inhabitants of the Cachar Hills, who possessed a vast jungle area for jhum cultivation. It seems that there was no objection to the Khasi occupying this small spot: it was apparently too small an area for the jhum cultivator —pan-leaf cultivation of the Khasi requires less than one twentieth of the land of the usual jhum cultivation. The Khasi who started pan-leaf cultivation were able to accumulate some capital, and after several years they started orange gardens. They had had experience of orange cultivation in their homeland, but this was the first time they had operated commercially.

The success of this orange cultivation was beyond their dreams. Hearing of good oranges at Jatinga, many Bengalee merchants from Dacca, Sylhet, Silchar and Gauhati began to come to buy them. Moreover, the village had the great advantage of being situated near the railway station. Oranges were sold by carloads. Unimaginable wealth came to the Jatinga people. Especially the founder's family, including his brother's and sister's, became extraordinarily wealthy: their income used to be Rs. 20,000 a year. The children were sent to the school which was established in the village and some were educated at colleges in Dacca, Sylhet and Shillong. The villagers had beautiful houses built by Manipuri and Bengalee carpenters. Actually the houses of Jatinga were known as some of the best construction in Assam.

Like the Shella people, they were managers of gardens and employed workers. Wealthy households used to engage several labourers annually, most of them from Jaintia where the Jatinga people had originated. These workers were provided with shelter in the servant quarters of their employer's house, but they had to provide meals for themselves. They were paid daily according to the work done. They were available to other households, when their employer had no work. Some labourers were also engaged locally among the Zemi-Naga, the Cacharee and the Kuki, though not as many as among the Jaintia. These local tribes were fairly well occupied by their jhum cultivation, and not used to being employed as workers. Therefore, most of them were not regular

19: Assam G-5 (1958) 1963 AR7 Khasi AR7

of timber or stone wall with plenty of doors and windows. Houses of most of the border villages were well constructed after up-to-date fashion, but are now in tottering condition for want of proper repair and maintenance.

4.5 **Educational facilities**.—The following table shows the extent of educational facilities enjoyed by the villages under enquiry.

TABLE B-4

Nearest school within a radius of (in mile)	No of villages having the nearest school				
	L. P.	M. E.	H. E.	Basic	Vocational school
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
0	9	0	0	2	0
1	3	1	0	3	0
2	4	2	0	1	0
3	2	11	5	3	0
4	0	0	1	2	0
more than 4 ...	0	0	12	0	20

The above table reveals that out of a total of 20 villages, 19 villages have got a Lower Primary school located within the village, 3 have got within a radius of 2 miles and 6 within a radius of 3 miles. Out of the 20 villages under general area selected at random from the district, only 9 villages have got a Lower Primary school within the village, and 3 villages within 2 miles of the village. In respect of secondary education the position is far from being satisfactory as the above table will reveal.

The number of pupils on the roll of the 21 Lower Primary and Basic schools located in the 20 villages was 1,158. Thus the average number of pupils on roll per village was 58 while the average number of families per village was 82. The poverty of the villagers is the main reason for this low enrolment. Many parents would rather like their children to do domestic work or send them in the fields than to allow them to indulge in the luxury of going to school.

4.7 **Communications facilities**.—As there are no railways, communication is available there within the district, the only communication facilities available to the people of the district is by road. Some of these roads are altogether unmetalled roads where even bullock carts can not ply throughout the year.

5.4 Literacy and Education

TABLE C-4

Distribution of Population by Standard of Education

	Border area			Project area			General area		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
(1)		(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(9)	(9)	(10)
1. Illiterate	1,056 (59.68)	1,371 (77.2)	66,444 (7.57)	936 (56.0%)	1,121 (72.67)	2,057 (63.38)	375 (50.4%)	323 (95.9%)	698 (93.91)
2. Primary or below ..	393 (22.22)	403 (22.69)	1,65 (2099)	380 (27.3%)	333 (21.62)	765 (25.93)	84 (10.8%)	61 (14.68)	147 (16.38)
3. Middle English ..	82 (4.63)	9 (0.5%)	(3.02)	66 (4.0%)	61 (3.4%)	127 (3.91)	6 (1.2%)	1 (0.3%)	7 (0.78)
4. Matriculate	65 (3.6%)	6 (0.3%)	31 (1.5%)	74 (1.6%)	8 (0.5%)	82 (1.4%)	—	—	—
5. Intermediate	(0.06%)	1 (0.0%)	9 (0.5%)	(0.1%)	—	3 (0.0%)	—	—	—
6. Graduate and above ..	(0.4%)	—	—	—	—	(0.0%)	—	—	—
Total ..	1,769 (100.0%)	1,809 (100.0%)	3,578 (100.0%)	1,417 (100.0%)	1,560 (100.0%)	2,981 (100.0%)	465 (100.0%)	437 (100.0%)	902 (100.0%)

19: Assam G-S (1958) 1963 AR7 Khasi AR7

*162 • 871 135

In border area and project area the percentage of literates is worked out at 24 and 31 respectively –a comparatively high figure for a rural area. This, however, cannot be regarded as a true index of literacy in the rural area of the district for the fact that villages from border area and project area were purposively selected almost all of which by virtue of their bigness in size and location in vantage points, happened to possess at least one school for quite a long time. The average picture for the district as a whole is brought out by the percentage of literates in the general area which is only 17. A comparison of this figure with that of 1951 census for the rural areas of the district which is only 12 per cent shows that during the last eight years there has been an increase in the percentage of literates.

As will be seen from table above the proportion of literates among males is higher than that among females throughout the district.

Economic Status

*162 #34

5.3: The following table shows the number of persons in the sample villages by sex and economic status.

19: Assam G-5 (1958) 1963 AR7 Khasi AR7

CHAPTER—X

Summary of main findings

125 10.1. Twenty-eight villages were selected for the purpose of the survey. Out of the 28 villages selected, 10 from Border area and 8 from Project area were selected purposively while the remaining 10 were selected at random from the entire district which is referred hereafter as general area.

166 Migration from big villages was rare but some migration was reported in respect of small villages.

164 Occurrence of Malaria, influenza and dysentery is a regular phenomenon in the area. Medical facilities were not found satisfactory and 793 as much as 78 per cent of the villages have no dispensary within a 871 radius of five miles. In regard to education, the facilities cannot also 489 be said to be unsatisfactory for more than 60 per cent of the villages 482 have a Lower Primary School. Transport facilities were not satisfactory also as much as 86 per cent of the villages still depend upon primitive mode of transport, namely head load. Correlated with outmoded form of transport, is the prevalence of unduly high cost of transport.

162 161 10.2. The number of the families covered by the survey was 1006 in the Border area, and 647 in the Project area and 184 in the General area. The average size of a village in the respective area is 100·6, 82·9 and 18·4 families. In the Border and Project areas females out number males being respectively 1076 and 1092 females per 1,000 males as against 940 females per 1,000 males in the general area. 212 Literacy is as high as 34 per cent in the border area and 31 per cent 562 in the Project area but as low as 17 per cent in the general area. In all the areas literacy among females is very low.

162 464 The working population (earners and earning dependents) is as high as 55 per cent in the Border area, 54 per cent in the Project area and 63 per cent in the general area. While there were no cases of unemployment in the Project and General areas, 53 persons were reported unemployed from border area.

241 162 463 10.3. 51 per cent of the families in Border area are wholly agricultural, 35 per cent partly agricultural and 14 per cent independent of agriculture. The corresponding figures for the Project area are 61, 31 and 8 per cent respectively while for the General area they are 70 per cent, 29 per cent, 1 per cent respectively.

Predominantly agricultural families constitute 67, 74 and 90 per cent of the families in Border, Project and General areas respectively.

162 423 10.4. 31 per cent of the families in Border area, 29 per cent in Project area and 10 per cent in General area were absolutely without any land while 25 per cent, 39 per cent and 24 per cent of the families in the respective areas possessed small holding ranging from 0·24 to 2·50 acres representing 11,24 and 26 per cent of the total holding area in the respective areas. 36 per cent of the families in Border and Project areas and 41 in General area possessed medium sized holding (3 to less than 10 acres)

20: Hunter G-4 (no date) 1897 AR7 Khasi AR7

697 In addition, a total of Rs. 899 (£89, 18s.) was expended on jail buildings. The manufacturing account shows cash receipts amounting to Rs. 60, against an expenditure of Rs. 29, or a net profit of Rs. 31 (£3, 2s).

797 EDUCATIONAL STATISTICS.—The management of education in the
• 871 Khásiand Jáintiá Hills is entirely in the hands of the Welsh Cal-
648 vinistic Mission, who first established themselves in the District about the year 1844. Though the Khásiás are naturally dull, and children are taken away from school before they have obtained more than a smattering of instruction, yet the perseverance of the missionaries has been rewarded by most satisfactory results. It is stated, in the Report of the Inspector of Schools for Assam for 1874-75, that 'a much larger proportion of the Khásiás know a little of reading, writing, and arithmetic than is the case, probably, in any other [562] District of either Assam or Bengal.' Female education, owing to the interest taken in this work by the wives of the missionaries, is also in a comparatively advanced condition. The missionary schools are largely subsidized by grants in aid from Government. The [212] teaching is conducted in English and in Khási, the Roman character being used in both cases.

The following paragraphs are compiled from the Education Report for 1874-75, above referred to. In that year the total number of schools open in the District was 73, attended by 1666 pupils. As compared with the area and the population, these figures show one school to every 84·34 square miles, and one pupil to every 85 inhabitants. As compared with the total number of males under ten years of age, the number of boys only attending school (1322) shows one scholar to every 13·1. The total expenditure on education in the same year was Rs. 17,722. 11. 3, or £1772, 5s. 5d.; towards which Government contributed Rs. 10,443. 2, fees and fines produced Rs. 208. 5. 3, while the remainder (Rs. 7071. 4) was expended by the Missionary Society from its own funds. The average cost of educating each pupil was Rs. 10. 10. 4, or £1, 1s. 3½d.

648 PRIMARY SCHOOLS.—With the exception of the schools at Cherrá
797 Punji, Jowái, Shillong, and Shellá, all the schools in the Hills may
872 properly be classed as primary, though several are returned as middle vernacular schools. On this principle the total number of primary schools is 64, in 45 of which a little English is taught. These 64 schools had 1026 pupils on their rolls at the close of the year 1874-75, and an average daily attendance of 879, comparing

20: Hunter G-4 (no date) 1897 AR7 Khasi AR7

favourably with an average attendance of 694 in the preceding year. Of the pupils on the rolls, 132 were professed Christians, 36 Hindus, and 1038 Khásiás. The total cost was Rs. 7127. 11. 6, or £712, 15s. 5d., towards which Government contributed Rs. 3246. The average cost of each pupil was Rs. 8. 7. 7, or 17s., of which Rs. 3. 14. 7 represents the share paid by Government. The chief failure among the Khásiás is stated by the Inspector to be in arithmetic. Four primary scholarships were awarded during the year by the Deputy-Commissioner, on the recommendation of the secretary to the Mission. These scholarships are of the value of Rs. 3 a month, or £3, 12s. a year, and are tenable for two years.

MIDDLE ENGLISH SCHOOLS.—There were four schools of this class during the year under report, with 397 pupils on the rolls, and an average daily attendance of 243. The total expenditure was Rs. 4581. 15. 9, or £458, 4s., towards which Government contributed Rs. 1478. 8; the average cost of each pupil was Rs. 18. 13. 7, or £1, 17s. 8d.

FEMALE INSTRUCTION.—The Khási and Jáintiá Hills is the only District of Assam, and one of the very few throughout all India, in which female instruction can be said to exist. During 1874-75 the number of girls attending the schools increased from 241 to 344, or by more than 42 per cent., showing 4·7 girls at school to every thousand of the female population, as opposed to ·4 in the Province generally. Of this number 24 were taught by Mrs. Hugh Roberts of Cherrá Púnjí, and 18 by Mrs. John Roberts of Shillá. During the year five of the girls were sent out as teachers, of whom one was placed in charge of the Shillong girls' school, which has 29 pupils.

NORMAL SCHOOL.—According to the classification adopted by the Education Department, the institution at Cherrá Púnjí, under the management of the Rev. Hugh Roberts, is described as partly 'Government normal' and partly 'aided English.' In 1874-75 the number of pupils on the rolls was 43, and the average attendance 39. There is a class of 10 girls, and of the 16 teachers turned out during the year, 5 were girls. The total cost was Rs. 4032. 6. 6, almost the whole being paid by Government. The average cost of each pupil was Rs. 109. 0. 7, or £10, 19s., of which Rs. 107. 0. 11 represents the share of Government. The following paragraph, quoted from Mr. Roberts' Report, illustrates what the missionaries have effected, and also the difficulties with which they have to contend:—'Cases have been brought to my notice during the past year

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20: Hunter G-4 (no date) 1897 AR7 Khasi AR7

of parents undergoing considerable privations rather than deny their children education; and in many families it has become a matter of ordinary routine to send the children to school. This only refers to the younger children; for after boys have attained their fourteenth or fifteenth year, their parents grow impatient for their pecuniary assistance. It is the custom among the Khásiás to inure very young children to work, so that they may earn enough to support themselves as soon as ever they can manage strap and basket. It is common for a boy to realise from ten *pie* to five *dands* a day for his parents; and it is considered sufficient sacrifice for the latter to have kept him at school up to his fourteenth year.'

KHASI STATES.—The following is a list of the nineteen semi-independent Khásí States or Democracies, with the particulars of information that are available for each, taken from the Assam Administration Report for 1875-76:—

(1) BHAWAL or WARRAH.—Name of Siem, U Raman Singh, age in 1876, 16 years; approximate population of State, 369; estimated gross revenue—from market dues, Rs. 10; from *mulkhad* on lime quarry, Rs. 16,000—total, Rs. 16,010, or £1601; products, rice, millet, *tejpát* or bay leaves, black pepper, Piper nigrum; minerals, lime.

(2) CHERRA or SOHRAH.—Siem, U Hijan Máwk, aged 40; population, 8060; revenue—from market dues, Rs. 7000; judicial fines, Rs. 150; *mulkhad* on lime quarry, Rs. 900; *nawabdiri* holding in Sylhet, Rs. 1300—total, Rs. 8650, or £865; products, cotton, millet, betel-nuts, *pán*, oranges, black pepper, Piper nigrum, chillies, turmeric, ginger, and honey; manufactures, bamboo mats and bamboo baskets; minerals, lime, iron, and coal.

(3) SWELLA.—*Wifhaddáhs*, U Jírdi, aged 63, and U Rái Singh, aged 35, of whom the former can read and write both Khásí and Bengálí a little; population, 3510; revenue—from market dues, Rs. 300; judicial fines, Rs. 400—total, Rs. 700, or £70; products, oranges, betel-nuts, and pine-apples; manufactures, bamboo mats and bamboo baskets; minerals, lime and coal.

(4) KHYRIM or NONG-KREM.—Siem, U Khar Singh, aged 32; population, 10,324; revenue—from pension allowed by the British Government, Rs. 1800; market dues, Rs. 3000; judicial fines, Rs. 400; *mulkhad* on lime quarry, Rs. 1500; contributions for State purposes, Rs. 1000—total, Rs. 10,100, or £1010; products, rice, cotton, millet, 'Job's tears,' cassia-bud, cinnamon, *tejpátang*